

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

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**MARKEY HAILS HHS REPORT ON CIGARS;
WILL RE-FILE 'CANSA' LEGISLATION
*CANSA -- The Cigars Are No Safe Alternative Act***

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA) today hailed the report of the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services which concluded that cigars are an emerging public health risk. Rep. Markey is the author of legislation filed in the 105th Congress to police the sale, distribution, and advertising of cigars targeted at America's teenagers. Rep. Markey's Cigars Are No Safe Alternative or CANSA Act will be reintroduced next month.

Available scientific evidence demonstrates that regular cigar smoking causes a variety of cancers including cancers of the lip, tongue, mouth, throat, esophagus, larynx, and lung, and that heavy cigar smokers and those who inhale deeply are at increased risk of coronary heart disease and can develop chronic lung disease. Nicotine and tar yields are far greater for cigars than for cigarettes, and the bigger the cigar, the bigger the danger. Large cigars emit 20 times more ammonia, and up to 10 times as much other cancer causing agents.

Markey said, "The HHS Inspector General's report serves to underscore the fact that cigars pose a deadly health risk. I continue to be alarmed that despite the serious risks, cigar use is up dramatically in the United States over the last five years, particularly among teenagers. In fact, data from the Centers for Disease Control's 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate that among high school students a whopping percentage are smoking cigars -- over 30 percent of the males and 10 percent of the females are current cigar smokers."

The CANSA Act would do the following:

- prohibit the sale and distribution of cigars to any individual who is under the age of 18.
- impose restrictions on the sale and advertising of cigars directed at youth, and eliminate cigar advertising on electronic media.
- encourage cigar manufacturers to end the practice of paying for, or participating in cigar product placements in movies and on television where a substantial segment of the viewing audience is under the age of 18.
- direct the FDA to require warning labels on cigars to warn cigar users about the health risks presented by cigars.
- require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study on the health effects related to cigar use and exposure.
- require the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to report to Congress on the sales,

- marketing, and advertising practices associated with cigars.
- require the Secretary of HHS to report to Congress on trends in youth access to, and use of, cigars.

Markey said, "I am hopeful that Congress will act to protect teens from the dangers of cigar smoking and drive home the point to all Americans that cigars are no safe alternative to cigarettes."

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